POINS. And, look, whether the fiery Trigon[1], his man, be not lisping to his master's old tables[2], his note-book, his counsel-keeper.

1 —the FIERY TRIGON, &c.] *Trigonum igneum* is the astronomical term when the upper planets meet in a fiery sign. The *fiery Trigon*, I think, consists of *Aries*, *Leo*, and *Sagittarius*. So, in Warner's Albion's England, 1602, b. vi. chap. xxxi.:

" Even at *the fierie Trigon* shall your chief ascendant be!"

Again, in Pierce's Supererogation, or a new Praise of the old Asse, &c. by Gabriel Harvey, 1593:

" — now the warring planet was expected in person, and the *fiery Trigon* seemed to give the alarm." STEEVENS.

So, in A Dialogue, both pleasaunt and pietifull, &c. by Wm. Bulleyne, 1564: " Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius are hotte, drie, bitter, and cholerike, governing hot and drie things; and this is called *the fierie triplicitie*." MALONE.

2 —LISPING TO his master's old tables, &c.] We should read—" *clasping too* his master's old tables," &c. i. e. embracing his master's cast off whore, and now his bawd. *This note-book, My counsel-keeper!* We have the same phrase again in Cymbeline:

" You *clasp* young Cupid's tables." WARBURTON.

I believe the old reading to be the true one. Bardolph was very probably drunk, and might *lisp* a little in his courtship: or might assume an affected softness of speech, like Chaucer's *Frere*. Tyrwhitt's edit. Prol. v. 266:

" Somewhat he *lisped* for his wantonnesse,
" To make his English swete upon his tonge."

Or like the Page, in The Mad Lover of Beaumont and Fletcher, who

" *Lisps* when he list to catch a chambermaid."

Again, in Love's Labour's Lost:

" ——He can carve too and *lisp*."

Again, in Marston's 8th Satire:

" With voyce distinct, all fine, articulate,
" *Lisping*, 'Fayre saynt, my woe compassionate:
" By heaven thine eye is my soule-guiding fate."

STEEVENS.

Certainly the word *clasping* better preserves the *integrity of the metaphor*: or perhaps, as the expression is *old tables*, we might read *licking*. Bardolph was *kissing* the *Hostess*: and old ivory books were commonly cleaned by *licking* them. FARMER.

The old table-book was a *counsel-keeper*, or a register of secrets: and so also was Dame Quickly. I have therefore not the least suspicion of any corruption in the text. *Lisping* is in our author's dialect making love, or in modern language *saying soft things*. So in The Merry Wives of Windsor Falstaff apologises to